

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE CABINET

6TH JULY 2016 AT 6.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors C. B. Taylor (Deputy Leader), K.J. May and P. J. Whittaker

Officers: Ms S. Hanley, Ms J. Pickering, Ms R. Bamford, Ms A. Singleton, Mr M. Dunphy, Mrs S. Sellers and Ms R. Cole

9/16 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors G. N. Denaro and M. A. Sherrey.

The Deputy Leader referred to the resignation of Councillor M. A. Sherrey as Leader of the Council and the resignation of Councillor R. J. Laight from the Cabinet. These matters would be reported and considered at the next meeting of the Council on 20th July 2016.

10/16 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor K. J. May declared an other interest in agenda item 8 (Asset of Community Value Application – The New Inn, Bournheath) as Chairman of Bournheath Parish Council. Councillor May stated she would leave the room whilst this matter was discussed. As this would leave the Cabinet inquorate, officers requested that the item be deferred until the next meeting of the Cabinet and this was agreed.

11/16 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 1st June 2016 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 1st June 2016 be approved as a correct record.

12/16 **BROMSGROVE DISTRICT PLAN 2011 - 2030 - PROPOSED MAIN MODIFICATIONS**

The Cabinet considered a report on the next stages in the approval and adoption process in respect of the Bromsgrove District Plan 2011 – 2030.

It was noted that the report identified the Main Modifications proposed by the Planning Inspector and detailed the public consultation on these which was now required. Members were reminded of the stages which the Plan had already been through including a lengthy Examination in Public.

Members' attention was drawn to the Main Modifications now proposed by the Inspector which were set out in paragraphs 3.17 to 3.44 of the main report and in Appendix 1. At this stage Cabinet was being requested to consider approving the consultation on the Main Modifications.

Councillor P. J. Whittaker asked for it to be recorded that he did not support the proposals in relation to the area identified for cross border housing growth with Redditch. He was however aware that the current recommendation related only to the public consultation process and so he would be voting in favour of the recommendation.

RECOMMENDED that the recommended Main Modifications of the Inspector as set out in Appendix 1 of the report be noted and that officers be authorised to proceed with an 8 week consultation on the Main Modifications to run from 27th July 2016 to 21st September 2016. Details of the method of consultation are as set out in paragraphs 3.47 to 3.50 of the report.

13/16

STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME

The Cabinet considered a report on the proposed revision of the Local Development Scheme (LDS) and the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) documents which both formed part of the suite of documents required to be published and maintained by the Strategic Planning section. Both documents required updating in view of changes in matters such as timescales and in methods of public consultation due to the development of technology. References to out of date processes and legislation had also been removed.

It was noted that the Local Development Scheme (LDS) document identified which development documents would be produced by the Council, the scope of the documents and the timescales involved. The revised LDS was set out in Appendix 1 to the report.

Members also noted that the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) document set out how engagement and consultation with communities would be undertaken. It also now included a section on neighbourhood planning. The revised SCI was set out in Appendix 2 to the report.

RECOMMENDED:

- (a) that the revised LDS as set out in Appendix 1 to the report be adopted as the Council's LDS;

- (b) that delegated authority be granted to the Head of Planning and Regeneration services in conjunction with the relevant Portfolio Holder to review and publish amended LDS timetables for the publication of the Development Plan Documents;
- (c) that the draft SCI as set out in Appendix 2 to the report be approved for publication as part of a six week period of public consultation during September/October 2016; and
- (d) that delegated authority be granted to the Head of Planning and Regeneration services in conjunction with the relevant Portfolio Holder to consider the response to the public consultation and, subject to no significant issues arising, to amend and adopt the SCI.

14/16

LOCAL COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SCHEME 2017/18

The Cabinet considered a report on the proposals for the Authority's Council Tax Support Scheme 2017/18 following public consultation on options being considered for inclusion in the scheme.

The Head of Customer Access and Financial Support reminded Members that if the current proposals were approved there would be a further public consultation prior to the submission of the final scheme to Cabinet and Council for consideration in November 2016. This would enable the final scheme to be published by 31st January 2017.

It was reported that the response to the consultation (set out in Appendix 1 to the report) had been low with only 25 responses received despite all current claimants being contacted directly and press and social media publicity. The feedback received had however been taken into account in proposing the options to be progressed.

The Head of Customer Access and Financial Support stressed that the proposals for the draft scheme were not intended to reduce the overall cost support provided to residents but to reduce the administrative burden wherever possible and to bring the scheme into line with other benefits, including Housing Benefit. This would enable claims to be assessed in tandem.

It was noted that the consultation on the draft scheme would be published and that key stakeholders, including existing working age claimants would be directly contacted in writing. Feedback would be used to inform any changes to the draft scheme before the final scheme was considered by Members.

It was also noted that any changes introduced would apply in respect of new claims only. Support on managing finances and advice on other potential benefits would continue to be made available.

Following discussion it was

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the outcome of the initial statutory consultation on options for change to the Local Council Tax Support Scheme be noted;
- (b) that the current scheme be changed as set out below with effect from April 2017/18:-
 - (i) reduce backdating of Council Tax Support to 4 weeks in line with the changes in Housing Benefit announced by Central Government;
 - (ii) enable claims to be processed based on information provided by the DWP without the need for further information;
 - (iii) removal of the family premium for new claims to bring the Council Tax Support Scheme in line with changes in Housing Benefit announced by Central Government

and that the amended version become the proposed Draft Scheme for 2017/18;

- (c) that authority be delegated to the Head of Customer Access and Financial Support to carry out the next phase of consultation on the Draft Scheme; and
- (d) that the final Scheme be presented to Cabinet to make recommendations to Council to allow for the necessary regulations to be published by 31st January 2017.

15/16

FINANCE MONITORING REPORT 2015/16

Members considered the report on the Council's financial position for revenue and capital for the financial year 2015/16. It was also reported that the Council's Accounts had been submitted in advance of the due deadline of 30th June 2016.

In relation to the revenue budget, it was noted that there was an underspend of £330k at the end of the financial year against a predicted underspend of £239k at the end of quarter 3. The reasons for this were referred to in section 3.3 of the report and within the detailed appendices. It was intended that the underspend would be transferred to balances.

The Executive Director of Finance and Corporate Resources confirmed that whilst the underspend was less than in previous years there would be further work undertaken to understand in detail the reasons for the underspend. In addition discussions with Heads of Service on future budgets for would focus on maintain the reduced level of expenditure.

In relation to the capital budget it was reported that there was a significant underspend of £8.3m. This was partly due to the carry forward of the Dolphin Centre replacement project to 2016/17, together

with a deferment of the vehicle replacement programme to enable the place team implementation to become stabilised.

Following discussion it was

RESOLVED that the outturn financial position on revenue and capital as detailed in the report be noted together with the transfer to balances of £331k.

RECOMMENDED:

- (a) that the movements of £63k in existing reserves as included in Appendix 2 to the report which reflects the approval required for April-March 2016 be approved; and
- (b) that the addition of new reserves of £197k as included in Appendix 2 to the report which reflects the approval required for April-March 2016 be approved.

16/16

ASSET OF COMMUNITY VALUE APPLICATION - THE NEW INN BOURNHEATH

This item was deferred for reasons set out in Minute 10/16 above.

The meeting closed at 6.30 p.m.

Chairman